

HIS HONOUR FREDERICK MCBAIN YOUNG, B.A., P.G.M.

By Bro. F. J. Bayfield, J.W., Duke of Connaught Lodge, No. 64

Frederick McBain Young was born at English River, near Montreal, on October 30, 1863, the son of the Reverend Alexander Young, a Presbyterian Minister, who had come to Canada from Inverness-shire, Scotland. His mother, the former Helen McBain, was descended from an old Canadian family in the Province of Quebec. Through Public and High Schools he then entered Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, where he graduated as a Bachelor of Arts. Following that he studied law at Osgoode Hall, Toronto, and was articled to the late Charles Miller, who came into prominence a few years ago because of his extraordinary will. Miller was, in spite of his many eccentricities, a shrewd and capable lawyer and the young student doubtless received a good grounding in the basic principles of law as well as a valuable insight into various phases of human nature.

After graduating from Osgoode Hall he went to Grimsby, Ont., joining the Craft there, and hung out his shingle as a barrister and solicitor, but the call of the West was strong and he set out for Vancouver, B.C., in 1892. Here he found that he could not take the law examinations necessary for admittance to the B.C. Bar until he had been a resident of the Province for at least six months. Like many of the young men who came West at that time, ready cash was none too plentiful, and he was almost forced to take a position as a teacher with the Vancouver School Board. However, he managed somehow to get along without having to teach and in due course he proceeded to Victoria to take his law exams. In those days one of the Judges acted as examiner and, after asking him a few questions, he handed him a paper for written answers. All afternoon the young lawyer scribbled away, and when he had finished he could find no one in the Court House except the janitor to whom to turn in the completed papers. The old Judge told him that he would be admitted to the Bar, and gave him a few words of fatherly advice.

Vancouver and Victoria seemed to have a plethora of budding lawyers at that time, and after looking around a bit, Young decided that the little bustling town of Nanaimo would be a good place to commence a law practice. Here he formed a partnership with the late E. M. Yarwood, and in a very short time he was taking a leading part in the activities of the City of his choice, including that of Doric Lodge, No. 18.

Here he married and established his home. His wife was Mary Edith Glaholm, whose mother was the first white girl born in Nanaimo and who is still hale and hearty at the ripe old age of 87. There were two children, Alexander McBain Young who is now practising law at Prince George, B.C., and a daughter, Marguerite Carmichael, whose husband, A. H. Carmichael, is Branch Manager of Canadian Bank of Commerce, Vancouver.

When the gold fields were discovered near Atlin in 1898 they were at first thought to be in the Yukon Territories and the claims were staked accordingly. Soon it was discovered that Atlin was actually in B.C., and since the size of the claims was different this gave rise to many disputes as to ownership. The B.C. Government, therefore, decided to send up a commissioner with full powers to settle the disputes according to their merits. Young heard of this and he, together with a few other young lawyers, including Richard McBride, who later became Sir Richard and Premier of the Province, and also Gordon Hunter, who later became Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of B.C., decided to go North and make a fortune either from gold, or by appearing in Court as Counsel for the litigants. Not one of them made a fortune, but the experience gained stood Young in good stead when a few years later in 1905 he was appointed the first Judge of the County of Atlin. Before going on the Bench, however, he had devoted himself to the B.C. Craft and served as Grand Master in 1901 and 1902.

In that capacity he officiated at the laying of the cornerstone of the Carnegie Library in Vancouver, and one of his most cherished possessions was an engraved trowel presented to him by the City of Vancouver on that occasion. He also laid the cornerstone of the Victoria High School.

It was always one of his regrets that his judicial duties, which he always performed with an outstanding degree of conscientiousness, did not allow his continuing to take a more active part in Masonic work.

In 1907 the County Court was moved to Prince Rupert and the first Court was held there in a tent run up for the purpose down near the waterfront. There he carried on for 28 years on the Bench, and built up an enviable record for fairness in the conduct of his Court, enjoying the esteem not only of the legal fraternity but of the public as a whole.

Few men were better known in that far flung Northern territory, and everyone from the highest to the lowest spoke highly of him. As an after dinner speaker he was much in demand for he was not only a fluent speaker, but was possessed of a keen mind and had a wonderful fund of humour to draw from.

Frederick McBain Young was the twenty-third Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of B.C., and held that office in the thirtieth year of Grand Lodge, the period of orderly development which followed the busy formative years of his early predecessors. He was immediately preceded by M.W. Bro. Harry H. Watson, as Grand Master.

Judge Young used to remark to his friends, "This position on the Bench is a lonely one, for while I know many people from one end of my jurisdiction to another, yet my position demands that I have only a few intimate friends to whom I can open my heart." He had, however, an appreciative knowledge of human nature and he sympathetically related this incident, which concerns a man of near Prince Rupert who was always in "hot water." One afternoon Judge Young went for a stroll and seated himself along side the cemetery which was bounded by a white picket fence. Shortly after this the man in the hot water rode down the road on his bicycle, and not seeing Judge Young, leaned his bicycle up against the picket fence and contemplated the tombstones, and was heard by Judge Young to say, "What a cinch!" On another occasion Judge Young was having dinner at Judge Barker's house in Nanaimo and there were present a number of others, amongst whom was a friend whose name was "Billy." After dinner a rather lively argument arose as to the spelling of a certain word, and Billy maintained the word was spelled in a certain way. At last Billy said, "Why, there is a dictionary; that should settle it"—and reached for the book. He opened it and said, "Yes, just as I thought," and he spelled the word agreeably to his contention. Judge Young was not satisfied, however, and he said "Billy, let me see that dictionary," whereupon Billy snapped the dictionary shut saying, "You win."

F. M. Young was Senior Warden of Doric Lodge, No. 18, in 1893 and 1894, and became Master in 1894 and 1895. In 1896 he assisted District Deputy J. Coburn to institute Cumberland Lodge at Union, B.C., now at Cumberland, and in 1896 and 1898 he was D.D.G.M. for District No. 5. In 1898 and 1899 (two years) he was Grand Senior Warden, but never served as Grand Junior Warden. He was D.G. Master in 1900.

Judge Young was the brother of Dr. Henry Esson Young, one time Minister of Education in the McBride Government 1907-1915, and was later widely known for his activities as Provincial Officer of Health.

In January 1933 Judge Young retired from the Bench on account of failing health and came to Vancouver to live. Here he resided until his death on the 31st of May, 1937. He was buried in the Nanaimo Cemetery with Masonic honours on June 2, 1937.